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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Thursday, July 21, 2011

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**Public Affairs**

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<http://www.justice.gov/usao/dc/news/2011/apr/news.html>

### **Former Background Investigator For Federal Government Pleads Guilty to Making a False Statement**

WASHINGTON - Stewart Chase, 53, a former background investigator who did work under contract for the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM), pled guilty today to a charge stemming from his falsification of work on background investigations of federal employees and contractors, announced U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. and Patrick E. McFarland, Inspector General for the Office of Personnel Management.

Chase, of Sterling, Virginia, pled guilty in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia to a charge of making a false statement. The Honorable James E. Boasberg scheduled sentencing for October 6, 2011. The charge carries a statutory penalty of up to five years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000. As part of the guilty plea, Chase has agreed to pay \$131,101 in restitution to the federal government.

According to a statement of offense submitted to the Court, Chase was employed by United States Investigations Services and CACI International Inc. as an investigator under contract to conduct background investigations on behalf of OPM's Federal Investigative Services.

Between July 2006 and December 2007, in more than four dozen Reports of Investigations on background investigations, Chase represented that he had interviewed a source or reviewed a record regarding the subject of the background investigation when, in fact, he had not conducted the interview or obtained the record. These reports were utilized and relied upon by the agencies requesting the background investigations to determine whether the subjects were suitable for positions having access to classified information, for positions impacting national security, or for receiving or retaining security clearances.

Chase's false representations have required OPM's Federal Investigative Services to reopen and rework numerous background investigations that were assigned to him during the

time period of his falsifications, at an estimated cost of \$131,101 to the U.S. government. The restitution in this case will be paid to Federal Investigative Services.

This is one of several cases prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia in the last three years involving false representations by background investigators and record checkers working on federal background investigations. Eight background investigators and two record checkers previously were convicted of charges.

Federal Investigative Services, formerly known as the Center for Federal Investigative Services or the Federal Investigative Services Division, through its workforce of approximately 7,300 investigators, is responsible for conducting background investigations for numerous federal agencies and their contractors, on individuals either employed by or seeking employment with those agencies or contractors. Federal Investigative Services processed approximately 2 million investigations in the 2010 fiscal year.

In conducting background investigations, the investigators conduct interviews of individuals who have information about the person who is the subject of the review. In addition, the investigators seek out, obtain, and review documentary evidence, such as employment records, to verify and corroborate information provided by either the subject of the background investigation or by persons interviewed during the investigation. After conducting interviews and obtaining documentary evidence, the investigators prepare a Report of Investigation containing the results of the interviews and document reviews, and electronically submit the material to OPM in Washington, D.C. OPM then provides a copy of the investigative file to the requesting agency, which can use the information to determine an individual's eligibility for employment or a security clearance.

In announcing the guilty plea, U.S. Attorney Machen and Inspector General McFarland praised the efforts of Special Agent Christopher Sulhoff, OPM, Office of the Inspector General, and Philip Kroop, Chief of Quality and Integrity Assurance, OPM-Federal Investigative Services. Mr. Machen and Mr. McFarland also acknowledged the work of Assistant U.S. Attorneys Ellen Chubin Epstein, Mary Chris Dobbie and Seth B. Waxman, who investigated and prosecuted this matter.

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